

**Vascular Birthmarks: Hemangiomas and Malformations.** By John B. Mulliken, M.D., F.A.C.S., and Anthony E. Young, M.A., M. Chir., F.R.C.S., W.B. Saunders, Philadelphia, 1988. (483 pp., \$150.00).

As stated by the authors in the preface, the confusing nomenclature of vascular birthmarks has been largely responsible for illogical thinking on the subject. The authors clearly establish early in the text the difference between hemangiomas and vascular malformations, and maintain this distinction throughout the book.

The book is divided into four sections: background, hemangiomas, malformations, problems, and solutions. The background section discusses the folklore, history, art, and literature surrounding vascular anomalies and will be enjoyed by all who read this text. It is followed by a detailed discussion of the classification of vascular birthmarks, which, I feel, is one of the most useful chapters in the book and should help simplify and clarify thinking on the pathogenesis and approach to this subject.

The next section deals with hemangiomas, and I recommend this portion of the text to every practicing dermatologist and pediatrician. This is the topic which is most relevant to the general practitioner in these fields. It is covered in detail and also includes a thorough discussion of active research in the field of angiogenesis.

Vascular malformations follow, and again every aspect of these abnormalities is thoroughly covered. Included are chapters on capillary, venous, arterial, lymphatic, and mixed vascular malformations.

The final section covers treatment of these anomalies and is directed to the vascular or plastic surgeon. The discussion on laser therapy of port-wine stains is the chapter most relevant to dermatologists, but, unfortunately, concentrates on the use of the argon laser, with very little time devoted to the newer generation pulsed tunable dye lasers.

In summary, the text is extremely well-written, and the photographs and illustrations are of the highest quality. Every aspect of vascular birthmarks is covered in great detail. This is a text written for a specialist, and would be a valuable asset to a medical school library or to a department of dermatology or surgery. Even though I feel that this is an excellent book, because of its specialization I am not sure that it is one the general practitioner of either dermatology or pediatrics would wish to buy.

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